

Message Text

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SUBJECT: ISRAEL AND THE WAR AFTER TWO WEEKS

1. AS WE HAVE REPORTED IN CONSIDERABLE DETAIL OVER PAST FEW DAYS, THE ISRAELIS RECOVERED QUICKLY FROM INITIAL SHOCK OF ARAB ATTACKS ON OCT 6 AND SUBSEQUENT SHOCK OF RECONCILING THEMSELVES TO THE FACT THAT VICTORY THIS TIME OVER THE ARABS WILL COST A HEAVY PRICE IN ISRAELI BLOOD. EVIDENCE OF THIS RECOVERY IS ALL AROUND US HERE AS IS THE OBVIOUS ISRAELI DETERMINATION TO STAY THE COURSE IN THIS WAR, WHATEVER THAT MAY MEAN. IT IS OBVIOUS THAT CENTRAL TO THIS SITUATION IS THE U.S. DECISION TO MOUNT AN EXPEDITIOUS MILITARY RE-SUPPLY EFFORT.

2. IN ANY EVENT, ECONOMICALLY THE ISRAELIS HAVE ADAPTED TO A LOWER LEVEL OF ESSENTIAL ECONOMIC ACTIVITY; MOBILIZATION IS BY NO MEANS 100 PERCENT AND NECESSARY SERVICES AND INDUSTRIES ARE BEING MANAGED; THERE IS NO ANTICIPATED SHORTAGE OF FOOD AND OTHER SUPPLIES ESSENTIAL FOR THE CIVILIAN POPULATION; FINANCIALLY THE GOI IS BUSY RAISING NECESSARY FUNDS ABROAD TO COVER ITS PROJECTED FOREIGN EXCHANGE REQUIREMENTS; ABOVE ALL, MILITARILY THE IDF HAS DEMONSTRATED A REMARKABLE ABILITY TO ADAPT ITS METHODS TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE VAST ARRAY OF NEW SOVIET WEAPONS IN THE HANDS OF THE ENEMY. IT IS ALSO OBVIOUS THAT THIS ADAPTATION HAS NOT BEEN AT THE EXPENSE OF

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THE IDF'S AUDACITY AND OFFENSIVE SPIRIT, AS EVENTS IN THE NORTH AND PARTICULARLY IN AND AROUND THE SUEZ CANAL SO CLEARLY DEMONSTRATED.

3. THIS, THEN, IS ISRAEL AFTER TWO WEEKS OF THE WAR ISRAEL DIDN'T EXPECT AND CERTAINLY DIDN'T WANT, BUT INTENDS TO WIN.

4. AS CONCERNs THE POLITICAL SITUATION HERE, PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE OF OUR MAGNIFICENT MILITARY RESUPPLY EFFORT HAS STRENGTHENED MRS MEIR AND HER GOVERNMENT DOMESTICALLY AND, AT LEAST FOR THE PRESENT, HAS SERVED TO STILL THE GROWING UNDERCURRENT OF DISSATISFACTION OVER ISRAEL'S FAILURE TO RECOGNIZE THE ARAB

THREAT IN TIME AND TO DELIVER PREEMPTIVE STRIKES. THIS IS NOT TO SUGGEST, HOWEVER, THAT THE PUBLIC MOOD IN ISRAEL HAS "SOFTENED" WITH RESPECT TO DEALINGS WITH THE ARABS. INDEED, I WOULD HAZARD A GUESS THAT MOST ISRAELIS ARE AT THIS POINT IN TIME CONVINCED THAT, SINCE IT APPEARS TO THEM THE ARABS ARE NOT INTERESTED IN COMING TO TERMS WITH ISRAEL'S EXISTENCE AND RIGHT TO SURVIVE, THERE IS NOT MUCH HOPE FOR A VIABLE PEACE SETTLEMENT AFTER THE CURRENT HOSTILITIES. THIS LINE OF REASONING LEADS THE ISRAELIS LOGICALLY TO THE CONCLUSION THAT ISRAEL, PERHAPS REGRETFULLY, CAN ONLY HOPE TO BUY TIME FOR ITS SECURITY. THIS MEANS THE MASSIVE DESTRUCTION OF ARAB FORCES ON BOTH FRONTS PRIOR TO A CEASEFIRE. ALTHOUGH I CANNOT ESTIMATE WITH AN PRECISION WHAT PROPORTION OF THE GENERAL ISRAELI PUBLIC BELIEVES OPIS LINE, IT IS UNDOUBTEDLY A LARGE MAJORITY; WITH A HIGH DEGREE OF CERTAINTY, HOWEVER, I BELIEVE WE CAN ASSUME 100 PERCENT OF THE ISRAELI MILITARY CURRENTLY FEEL THIS WAY.

5. TO SOME EXTENT, THIS WIDESPREAD FEELING IN ISRAEL MUST BE CONSIDERED AS A CONSTRAINT ON THE DIPLOMATIC FLEXIBILITY OF THE GOI. CONCEIVABLY AND EVEN PROBABLY MRS. MEIR COULD SELL TO HER CABINET AND TO THE COUNTRY A CEASEFIRE UNDER CONDITIONS WHICH WOULD NOT INVOLVE THE WHOLESALE DESTRUCTION OF REMAINING ARAB FORCES. I AM NOT, THEREFORE, ATTEMPTING TO PAINT A PICTURE OF PESSIMISM WITH RESPECT TO THE POSSIBILITIES OF AN EARLY END TO THE HOSTILITIES, PARTICULARLY IF THE US SHOULD INSIST. I AM SAYING, HOWEVER, THAT AS ISRAEL ENDS ITS SECOND WEEK

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IN THE WAR WE SHOULD RECOGNIZE THE DIFFICULTY THE GENERAL POLITICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SITUATION HERE ON THE GROUND, COUPLED WITH THE CURRENT ISRAELI MILITARY POSTURE, WOULD POSE FOR THE GOI IN ITS ATTEMPTS TO AGREE TO ANY SUCH PROPOSAL.

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